



**TESTIMONY OF S. DEREK PHELPS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL**

SUBMITTED TO THE ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE

MARCH 3, 2008

Good morning Senator Fonfara, Representative Fontana, ranking members, and distinguished members of the Energy and Technology Committee. My name is Derek Phelps; I am the Executive Director of the Connecticut Siting Council.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and speak in favor of Raised H.B. No. 5725, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL.

There are two components to the proposed bill which I will discuss. The first relates to proposed changes concerning the Council's Forecast of Loads Report and the second concerns reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.

As do other similar boards and commissions, the Council reimburses for appropriate, out-of-pocket expenses such as mileage, parking, and meal expenses when performing their official duties. Per statutory direction, the duties of Council members include holding hearings in the affected community in which a project is proposed. Naturally, these duties include significant travel throughout the state.

Connecticut General Statutes § 16-50m requires that the Council hold an evidentiary hearing on each application for a certificate for a facility and that at least one hearing session be held in the county (community) in which the facility is to be located after 6:30 p.m. for the convenience of the public. Council members have their dinner meal during a break that occurs in the interim period between an afternoon formal evidentiary session and the evening public comment session.

By way comparison, the statutory language related to other state agencies, such as the Office of State Ethics, makes clear that both per diem payments and reimbursable expenses are authorized by law. (Please see C.G.S. § 1-80(f)).

Thank you for this opportunity to appear before this committee. I would be pleased to respond to any questions.

REFERENCE NOTES

COUNCIL MEMBER REIMBURSABLES PAID				
	½ year FY08	FY2007	FY2006	FY2005
Non-employee reimbursements (51800)	\$13,645	\$20,617	\$21,969	\$20,280

FORECAST REPORT EXPENSES (not including staff hours)				
	Forecast 2007	Forecast 2006	Forecast 2005	Forecast 2004
Graphic Design/Printing	\$18,311	\$10,876	\$8,688	\$4,774
Advertising	\$9,219	\$8,286	\$8,784	\$6,686
Transcription	\$789	\$781	\$1,803	\$630
Audio Tech.	\$631	0.00	\$1,154.	0.00
Council Attendance	\$1,315	\$1,150	\$2,562	\$1,149
Meeting Exp.	\$275	\$54	\$1,457	\$49
TOTALS	\$30,540	\$21,147	\$24,448	\$13,288

H.B. 5725
AN ACT CONCERNING THE CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

ERRATA

1. Subsection (b) of the bill reads in part: “(6) a list of planned natural gas transmission lines”.
This section should read as follows: “(6) a list of planned natural gas transmission facilities.”
2. Subsection (c) of the bill reads in part: “The council shall hold a public hearing on such filed electric forecast reports annually and such filed natural gas forecast reports biennially.”
This section should read as follows: “The council shall hold a public hearing on such filed electric and natural gas forecast reports biennially.”
Alternatively the section could read: “The council shall hold a public hearing on such filed electric forecast reports biennially and such filed natural gas forecast reports biennially.”
3. Subsection (c) of the bill reads in part: “Upon reviewing such forecast reports, the council [may] shall issue its own report assessing the overall status of natural gas loads, consumption and resources in the state.
This section should read as follows: “Upon reviewing such forecast reports, the council [may] shall issue its own report assessing the overall status of electric and natural gas loads, consumption and resources in the state.